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General and complete disarmament: implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction

Security Council
Seventy-third year

Letter dated 23 November 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the joint statement of Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Burundi, China, Comoros, Congo, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Russian Federation, State of Palestine, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam and Zimbabwe on "Upholding the Chemical Weapons Convention", delivered at The Hague on 20 November 2018 at the twenty-third session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 101 (k), and as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) D. **Polyanskiy**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to letter dated 23 November 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and Russian]

Joint statement on behalf of Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Burundi, China, Comoros, Congo, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Russian Federation, State of Palestine, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam and Zimbabwe

Upholding the Chemical Weapons Convention

We, the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (CWC), committed to achieving the goal of freeing the world of chemical weapons, strongly condemn the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere and under any circumstances.

We commend the contribution made by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to freeing the world from that type of weapons of mass destruction.

We emphasize that integrity and comprehensive universality of the CWC are of critical importance for achieving the object and the purpose of the Convention and maintaining international peace and security.

We consider the inviolability of the fundamental CWC provisions, as well as the operating principles of the OPCW, its principal and executive bodies, such as the Conference of the States Parties (the CSP), the Executive Council and the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW, to be an indispensable prerequisite for ensuring further effective functioning of the OPCW as one of the most successful multilateral mechanisms in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

We believe that the decision of the Fourth Special Session of the CWC CSP of 27 June 2018 to delegate authority to the OPCW Technical Secretariat that is not provided for in the Convention, as well as the proposals by this OPCW administrative body to assume attribution functions to identify the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons go beyond the scope of the CWC.

Such decisions and proposals which in view of the technical nature of the OPCW are of principal importance must be considered solely in line with Article XV of the Convention.

The disunity among the States Parties to the CWC due to the politicization of the problem of the use of chemical weapons significantly reduces the efficiency of our Organization's work, as it prevents us from focusing on common and genuinely pressing tasks that are set out in the Convention and have been successfully performed for many years.

In light of the above, we call on the States Parties to the CWC to cooperate with each other in a constructive manner and seek to restore the spirit of consensus in the OPCW for the sake of integrity and universality of the Convention.